

**258th Meeting of the
Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)**

Report

*November 14, 2021
ECO Secretariat*

Report

The 258th CPR Meeting was held under the Chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Ahmet Gurbanov, Ambassador of **Turkmenistan** to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Permanent Representative to ECO on November 14, 2021. The Meeting was attended by the Permanent Representatives of Republic of **Azerbaijan**, Islamic Republic of **Iran**, Republic of **Kazakhstan**, Republic of **Tajikistan**, Republic of **Turkey** and Republic of **Uzbekistan** as well as Representatives of Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan**, **Kyrgyz Republic** and Islamic Republic of **Pakistan**. The ECO Secretary General and the relevant staff of the Secretariat also attended the Meeting. List of participants is enclosed as **Annexure-I**.

2. **H.E. Mr. Ahmet Gurbanov, the Chairman** while welcoming the participants started the meeting according to agenda.

Agenda Item No.1

Adoption of the Agenda

3. The **Council** adopted the following Agenda of the 258th CPR Meeting:
- 1) Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 258th CPR Meeting
 - 2) Adoption of the Draft Report of the 257th CPR Meeting
 - 3) Preparation for the 15th ECO Summit, preceded by 25th COM (*continued*)
 - 4) Follow-up and mid-term review of ECO Vision 2025 (*continued*)
 - 5) Participation of Turkish Cypriot State in the 15th ECO Summit, preceded by the 25th COM Meeting
 - 6) Administrative matters:
 - Appointment of new Deputy Secretary General (Trade and Investment, Agriculture and Industry)
 - Draft Budget proposal of ECO for the financial year 2022
 - Recommendations of the Selection Panel
 - 7) Any other business
 - 8) Date of the next CPR Meeting

Agenda Item No.2

Adoption of the draft Report of the 257th CPR Meeting

4. The **Council** adopted the draft report of the 257th CPR Meeting circulated to the Member States vide Secretariats' Note Verbale No. Note Verbale No. CFU/CPR/257th Meeting/2021/1157 dated October 27, 2021.

Agenda Item No.3

Preparation for the 15th ECO Summit, preceded by 25th COM (*continued*)

Rotation of the Post of ECO Secretary General

5. Continuing discussions in the matter, the **Chair** reminded that in their previous session the draft agendas of 15th ECO Summit and 25th COM were endorsed except agenda item No.6 concerning the rotation of the post of ECO Secretary General. He requested the Member States to resume deliberation from this agenda item to facilitate the process.

6. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** considered that due to paucity of time it would be difficult, at this stage, to reach an agreement in regard to the rotation of the post of ECO Secretary General. He, therefore, suggested that the 25th COM might be requested to task the CPR together with the Secretariat to work out concrete proposals in the matter for finalization/ decision by the 26th COM.

7. The **Council** decided to refer the matter to the 25th COM for seeking the required mandate to enable the CPR together with Secretariat to work out the concrete proposals regarding rotation of the post of ECO Secretary General.

Draft Ashgabat Consensus for Action

8. The **Chair** while appreciating the Member States for their active participation and suggestions during the PrepCom's Sessions, recalled that the 6th meeting of PrepCom finalized the text of draft Ashgabat Consensus for Action except three unsettled paragraphs for further consideration by CPR.

9. The **Chair** further conveyed that the Turkmenistan side proposed the following sentence to be appropriately incorporated in the preamble part of the draft document: *"Highlighting the importance of the UN General Assembly Resolution dated September 9, 2021 on cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization"*.

10. The **Council** found consensus on the draft document, observing one paragraph concerning Azerbaijan to be settled between Azerbaijan and Iran. While agreeing on the sentence proposed by Turkmenistan for incorporation in the draft document, the Council requested the delegates of Azerbaijan and Iran to mutually finalize the said Para to facilitate the working of SOM scheduled for November 26, 2021 in Ashgabat.

ECO Award 2021

11. The **Chair** requested the Secretariat to brief on the received nominations and procedure regarding selection of winners for the ECO Awards.

12. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General**, Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli briefed on the background of ECO awards as well as procedure of convening the Meeting of the relevant Selection Committee. He informed that 73 nominations were received from the Member States for ECO Awards to be given for outstanding research work and/or achievement in the fields of; (i) economics (ii) history, culture, literature and fine arts (iii) science and technology (iv) education and (v) agriculture and environment. While explaining the selection procedure for winners, he provided the following details:

- i) The Selection Committee of ECO Awards may be comprised of authorized experts/representatives from each Member State. Since 2021, as no expert is introduced by the Member States for the ECO Award Selection Committee, the Permanent Representatives of the Member States would be considered as ex-officio members of the Selection Committee and the Chairman of the CPR will also be the Chairman of the Committee.
- ii) Each Member State shall have the right of only one vote.
- iii) The ECO Secretary General will also be ex-officio Member of the Selection Committee and will have the right of one vote.
- iv) As per the Modalities, selection will be made by the principle of two-third majority of the total members of the Selection Committee.

13. Moreover, the **Deputy Secretary General** informed that due to the prevailing COVID conditions, the host authorities proposed that the Award ceremony would be conducted by handing over the awards to the designated delegates of the Member States on behalf of their respective winners.

14. The **Chair** noted that due to the shortage of time the CPR would finalize and recommend the names of the winners for ECO Awards 2021. He, therefore, requested one of the strongest nominees from each Member States separately for ECO Awards.

15. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran**, referring his previous views in the matter, reiterated that this was a very professional process requiring thorough scrutiny to determine merit of the nominees. Moreover, he stressed that it should be a general public call rather than making nominations only from government channels. He noted that by doing so we could call the attention of not only professors/academics and professional practitioners but also stimulate the interest of students and some target groups to think of ECO, adding that the topics should be related to promote ECO cooperation on different issues. He emphasized that our specialized agencies, i.e. ECO Science Foundation, ECO Culture Institute and ECO Educational Institute might be involved to facilitate the scrutiny of credentials in respect of nominees for ascertaining suitability of the candidates in each faculty for ECO Awards. While discouraging the finalization of the names at this forum within a very short time, he expressed Iran's readiness for necessary rectification in the relevant modalities for future, so that the procedure should be done at least one year before Summit.

16. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** considered that the points raised by Iranian delegate are very valid. He underlined that the ECO had evolved into project-oriented organization, conducting small-scale projects and studies to facilitate its work. He emphasized the importance of disseminating such research topics among public to be prepared beforehand, noting the Member States' receptivity in this regard. He acknowledged that entering into this process could generate visibility and interest in the relevant segments of the Member States, making the procedure more transparent. He said that the suggestion for naming single candidate was practically

easy but not feasible as far as the principle of fairness is concerned, adding that in the event of nominating a strong candidate only in one or two fields, the other important areas would be neglected. He, therefore, seconded the idea for refining the existing modalities to make the procedure more transparent and fair.

17. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** also supported the narrative of Iran and Pakistan in the matter, making the procedure more clear and competitive. He considered it not necessary to convene the meeting of selection committee, adding that this might also be a written procedure amongst the institutes so that the national experts and specialized bodies could make their views and comments. Moreover, he emphasized on setting clear-cut deadlines from the beginning to facilitate the process and make it more transparent and expeditious.

18. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** generally supported the views of the Member States. However, he recalled that some Member States, including Kazakhstan had no representation in the ECO specialized bodies, inquiring how they could participate in such a process of evaluating the credentials of candidates nominated for ECO Awards. Though considered achieving no sane aim by entering into such a complex procedure, he said that at least an effort might be made to this end. However, he also said that based on the existing practice each Member State is supposed to get one award.

19. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Tajikistan** endorsed the viewpoints expressed by the Member States. However, he emphasized to keep in view the principle of one country one award, allocating a year-wise specific area to each Member State for nomination of candidate.

20. The **ECO Secretary General** appreciated the Member States for their constructive points on this important issue. He said that the concerns raised by the Permanent Representative of Iran are quite valid, pointing out that there exist a particular clause in the existing modalities for ECO Awards that provides that in order to elevate the work of selection committee, the list of nominees may be forwarded to the relevant ECO institutions to seek their views and order of preference for consideration by the said committee during the process of selection. He also supported the idea to start the selection process of nominees for ECO Awards well in time.

21. The **Council** thoroughly looked into the various aspects of discussion as well as considered the proposals and views of the Member States in regard to procedural method for ECO Awards. It requested the Secretariat to develop some concrete proposals, based on the foregoing recommendations of the Member States, for next time consideration by CPR.

22. The **Council** further noted that all the Member States named one of their strongest candidates for ECO Awards, except Pakistan that sought some time to convey the name of their candidate for the said Awards.

23. While endorsing the names given by the Member countries as per enclosed list, the **Council** encouraged the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for expediting the particulars of their nominee, so that the list of winners of ECO Awards may be finalized for onward submission to the 25th COM.

24. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** informed that their Foreign Minister would be accompanying the Honourable President of Iran, reaching Ashgabat in the morning of November 27, 2021 for participation in the upcoming meeting of the COM and Summit. He, therefore, requested the host authorities to consider the possibility of organizing the 25th COM in the afternoon of November 27, 2021. He further noted that this would also provide sufficient time to the SOM and Secretariat for finalizing the draft text of the report of COM.

25. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** considered most of the Tehran-based delegates intending to participate in the upcoming COM/Summit would prefer to travel to Ashgabat by road. Relevantly, he inquired whether such delegates would be required to bear TIR or International Registration numbers to enable the entry of their vehicles into Turkmenistan, as well as the required COVID regulations and visa requirements to this end. Moreover, while referring the information previously given by the Chair as regards Turkmenistan's intention to allow operation of special flights via Turkey to Ashgabat for facilitating the participants, he requested for any decision in this regard to be shared with their relevant authorities, enabling them to finalize their travel plans.

26. The **Chair**, while updating on the events' preparations being made in Ashgabat, stated that the proposal made by Iran about holding of the COM in the afternoon of November 27, would be taken up with the host authorities, adding that any outcome in this regard would be shared in due course.

27. The **Chair** explained that the host authorities are receiving the composition of the delegations from Member States and for visa all will be facilitated as per common practice and Rules. The Turkish Airlines will operate its regular flights for Ashgabat from Istanbul on November 21, 23 & 25 and most of participants will be travel through Istanbul, he added.

Agenda Item No.4

Follow-up and mid-term review of ECO Vision 2025 (continued)

28. Referring the previous discussion in the matter, the **Chair** recalled that the draft report of the High Level Committee (HLC) on midterm review of the ECO Vision 2025 was circulated amongst the Member States for consideration vide Secretariat's Note Verbale dated November 11, 2021. He requested the Co-Chair of HLC to update the Council in this regard.

29. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** informed that the last session of HLC was convened on November 10, 2021, managing the finalization of the draft report on midterm review with the understanding that substantial issue, if

any, may be raised during CPR or otherwise the same would be submitted to SOM/COM through CPR for appropriate decisions. He informed that the circulated draft report contains four parts including (i) review of Vision “Expected Outcome”, (ii) 14th ECO Summit proposals not covered by Vision, (iii) recommendations of the High-Level Committee and (iv) decisions on the draft report to be taken by the COM. He also thanked the Chair as well as the second Co-Chair from Pakistan and the delegates of the Member States for their cooperation and active participation in the proceedings of the HLC.

30. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** noted that some proposals regarding corridor issues expressed by their President during 14th Summit were not included in the 3rd part of HLC’s report (page-23). He requested for considering the same to be reflected in the relevant part of the report, mentioning the titles of the corridors.

31. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** though acknowledged the importance of ECO corridors as proposed by the ECO leaders during 14th Summit, pointed out that it was not suggestible to reflect such details of different corridors in the said draft document. He noted that to avoid consumption of several pages just to name various corridors, the concept was presented in the report in a generalized manner. However, if the Member States may consider it necessary to add such details in the document, they could propose by-name incorporation of their corridors in the report.

32. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** said that as he mentioned during HLC’s proceedings, there are several corridors named by our heads of states during the 14th Summit. He mentioned that the projects’ titling was avoided in the document following the rational procedure in ECO that suggests any new proposal to be first studied and endorsed by the relevant ministerial bodies.

33. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** considered that the issue was minor, proposing that if were another meeting of CPR before the COM, it would be appropriate to finalize the text there to facilitate the work of the SOM.

34. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Tajikistan** appreciated and thanked the HLC for developing such an important document. He further inquired whether HLC would continue meeting after the upcoming Summit to take into account the fresh proposals of the ECO leaders for incorporation in the Vision Document.

35. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** pointed out that Page-57 of the document concerning recommendations provides at serial No. 11 that the Secretariat should propose the incorporation of the ideas/instructions given by the Summit in the vision implementation framework to the following RPC meeting for consideration/action.

36. The **Council**, while endorsing the whole text of the draft report prepared by HLC on midterm review of ECO Vision 2025, agreed to finalize the pending issue at page 23 of the document during next meeting of CPR to be held before COM.

Agenda Item No.5

Participation of Turkish Cypriot State in the 15th ECO Summit, preceded by the 25th COM Meeting

37. The **Chair** informed that Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkish Cypriot State requested for participation of Turkish Cypriot State in the 15th ECO Summit and the 25th COM Meeting, which was circulated amongst Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale dated October 27, 2021. He requested the Member States to consider the request of Turkish Cypriot State for attending the abovementioned meetings in its capacity as "Observer" according to the Modalities for Granting Observer and Dialogue Partnership Status at ECO.

38. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** requested the Council to consider the request of the Turkish Cypriot State favourably as a regular practice for invitation to Turkish Cypriot State to participate in the upcoming Summit and COM as Observer.

39. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Tajikistan** noted that the rules allowed the participation of ECO Observers in ECO events, whereas the participation in the Summit is upon the willingness of host country.

40. The **ECO Secretary General** clarified that an observe may be invited to attend, without the right to vote, the inaugural and closing ceremonies of the ECO Meetings of the Heads of State, Council of Ministers, Regional Planning Council and sectoral ministerial or high-level meetings upon the invitation by the ECO Secretariat with prior consensus to be reached at the CPR provided that remaining Members choose to abstain and/or are not against the decision.

41. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** while referring the Turkish Cypriot State' previous participations in ECO Summit and COM according to the Modalities supported the request of Turkish Cypriot State.

42. The Representative of **Turkmenistan** stressed that their previously circulated note was specific to the participation of Member States only. Regarding participation of Turkish Cypriot State in the COM/Summit, he informed that the matter was under consideration by their authorities. The final decision in this regard will be shared in due course, he added.

43. The Representative of Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** inquired whether the request for participation in the said events was made only by Turkish Cypriot State or also by other ECO observers. He said that precedents might be followed in the matter, avoiding any exception.

44. The **ECO Deputy Secretary** General, Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli clarified that the Secretariat received the request for participation in the upcoming Summit and COM only from Turkish Cypriot State.

45. Considering the views/comments of the Member States and clarification given by the Representative of Turkmenistan, the **Chair** concluded that since the matter was under consideration by Turkmenistan side, any decision in this regard would be taken based on the response of the host authorities.

Agenda Item No.6

Administrative matters:

- Appointment of new Deputy Secretary General (Trade and Investment, Agriculture and Industry)

46. The **Chair** informed the Council about the nomination of Mr. Mohsen Esperi from the Islamic Republic of Iran for appointment against the post of Deputy Secretary General (T&I and A&I) which was circulated amongst the Member States through Secretariat's Note Verbale dated October 26, 2021.

47. Having consensus in the matter, the **Council** agreed to refer the nomination of Mr. Mohsen Esperi against the post of Deputy Secretary General (T&I and A&I) for consideration of appointment by the 25th COM scheduled to be held on November 27, 2021.

- Draft Budget proposal of ECO for the financial year 2022

48. The **Chair** conveyed that the ECO draft budget-2022 was circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariats Note Verbale October 31, 2021, seeking the consideration of the Member States in this regard.

49. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** appreciated the efforts made by the ECO Secretary General and Secretariat for preparation of said draft budget, conveying Turkey's support in this regard.

50. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran**, while referring the circulation of the draft budget-2022 in October, inquired if any Working Group was established to facilitate the preparation of the said budget document. He also inquired the extent to which GRF could be utilized on account of staff's salaries, noting that as per previous record the utilization of GRF was specific to compensate some budgetary deficits. He further sought rational for proposing across-the-board fix increase of US\$ 200/- in the salary, including D, P and A level staff, adding that as a matter of fact one who gets less should fairly be paid more. He emphasized on the application of rational approach in case of increase in house allowance which is proposed to be enhanced at higher rates for those who are already receiving bigger amounts. Acknowledging the recent inflationary trend in the host country, he pointed

out that there was also high exchange rate between US dollar and Iranian Riyal, making Iran one of the best places to live.

51. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran**, while realizing that due to the contained COVID conditions more travelling was possible for in-persons meetings, requested clarification about travel expenses which are proposed to be increased from 1.55% to 2.29%, whereas just 0.02% increase was suggested in the Special Support Fund which is supposed to finance the participation of one person from one country in ECO meetings. Referring first page of the draft budget document, he said that there was a proposal for allocating GRF for 50% of the allocated budget for staff's salary & allowances, seeking clarification in this regard.

52. The ECO Secretary General highlighted that the proposed budget for year 2022 is 4.89% less than the budget for 2021, which is an important element to look into account.

53. The Chief Accountant explained that in view of the austerity measures taken in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19, there was a considerable accumulation of around US\$ 1 million in GRF given the fact that no or limited physical events or activities were made during this period. Relevantly, it was considered appropriate to utilize the GRF to accommodate the increase in the salary with a view to meeting the organization's commitment towards its staff. She informed that the proposed salary increase was supposed to be made in 2020 or 2021 that could not be materialized due to the pandemic conditions and other related issues. The other factor that provides ground for the proposed increase in staff salary is very limited number of staff rotation in 2022 that would avoid making sufficient staff-related expenditure in the next year. She stated that the increase is proposed only in staff's basic salaries and house allowance without any increase in the conveyance allowance. She underlined that though appears to be a fix increase of US\$ 200/- in all staff salaries, it technically proposes percentage-wise higher increase in the salary of low grade staff, exempling that this way envisages 6% increase in D, 10% in P and more in A level staff.

54. The Chief Accountant further stated that most of the non-resident D and P level foreign members of staff hire furnished accommodations, paying more on this account than A level resident staff. Therefore, it is considered appropriate to make increase in house allowance with the difference of US \$ 25/- in each category. As far as increase in travel expenses is concerned, it may be noted that due to the normalizing COVID conditions the Secretariat is going to resume its activities/meetings in physical mode, she added. Clarifying the difference between Travel Expenses (TE) and Special Support Fund (SSF), she said that the TE is supposed to cover the cost of airfare and DSAs as well as other related expenditure of staff, whereas the SSF is incurred only on account of reimbursement/procurement of air tickets to the participants of the Member States while the organization of events, approved by ECO decision-making bodies under SFF. Giving clarity on allocating GRF for 50% of the budget, she stated that it was not 50% of the GRF but 50% of the basic salaries, house allowances and other related expenses of staff, including for the vacant posts.

55. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** appeared disagreed with the approach to increase fix amount of US\$ 200/ in the salaries of all staff of the Secretariat irrespective of their categories/grades. He proposed the Secretariat to come up with a better formulation to accommodate the staff fairly, introducing compensation mechanism for those of the staff who receive less. He emphasized that utilization of GRF on such issues does not look appropriate, seeking a better way forward to meet such ends. He particularly mentioned that due to some vacant posts, a considerable amount is saved. It is upon the prudence of the Secretary General to utilize such money to accommodate the most hardworking staff, avoiding its transfer to GRF as the usage of money from GRF would require authorization by the COM. While seeking such clarifications, he expressed concurrence to stand with consensus on the issue. Moreover, he proposed to obtain COM's authorization for CPR to address and decide the matter after necessary adjustments in the budget 2022.

56. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** conveyed their no objection for approval of ECO Budget for 2022. However, he proposed that the raised issues might be addressed in the next meeting of CPR for onward submission to COM.

57. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** recalled that they broke the silence procedure last year for better understanding on the utilization of GRF. He added that a working group was established by CPR to that end, and the issue stood clear from their side. He further said that compensating the increase in staff's salaries is not a primary issue in their perspective, noting that there is a provision of staff's annual increment in every organization. Though the procedure was stopped by Turkey due to the pandemic conditions last year, the Staff was required to work even round-the-clock to recover during such hard period. To avoid any discouragement in staff, as well as prevent any wrong indication to the Member States that an organization has not been able to formulate the budget for presentation to its COM, he conveyed Turkey's readiness to adopt the proposed draft budget in the CPR. He requested other Member States to also convey their views/comments in this regard.

58. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Tajikistan** stated that in principle all countries are agreed with the parameters of draft budget which is less than the previous year's budget. He proposed to establish a working group to discuss the observations and desire clarification to facilitate the COM's decision in this regard.

59. The **Council** advised the Secretariat to clarify/address the observations/queries raised during the meeting and decided to continue deliberations for finalization of draft ECO budget for 2022 during the next CPR before COM.

- Recommendations of Selection Panel

60. The Selection Panel met on November 14, 2021, the meeting was coordinated by Deputy Secretary General (Administration) and Chaired by the Representative of the Embassy of Turkmenistan. Other participants of the meeting included the Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Turkey and Turkmenistan.

61. The Selection Panel made the following recommendation(s) for consideration by the CPR:

Director for Agriculture & Industry (A&I) (Category-I, D2)

Mr. Gurkan Polat (Turkish National) may be appointed as Director for Agriculture & Industry (A&I) for a full term of three (03) years from the date of joining.

Program Officer for Energy, Minerals & Environment (EME) (Category-II, P3)

The tenure of service of Mr. Mojtaba Faraji (Iranian National) may be extended till the arrival of his successor.

62. The **Council** approved the recommendations of the Selection Panel.

Agenda Item No.7

Any other business

63. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** while recalling that 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy held in June 2021 strongly supported the process of establishing ECO Clean Energy Centre (ECO-CEC) and desired the finalization of applications from the intending host countries till the end of August 2021. The UNIDO, based on its assessment, selected the Republic of Azerbaijan to host the ECO-CEC, he added. Furthermore, he requested the Council to include the matter in the draft agenda of 25th COM.

64. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** congratulated the Republic of Azerbaijan for their candidacy to host the ECO Clean Energy Centre and supported the proposal regarding inclusion of the matter in the draft agenda of 25th COM.

65. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** requested the Secretariat to update the Council in this regard because the UNIDO is not an ECO decision making body. He looked for the concrete proposal to be submitted to the COM for appropriate decision. However, he added that the issue is still under process of consultation between the relevant authorities of Iran and UNIDO.

66. The ECO Deputy Secretary General, Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli briefed the Council that a consultation meeting concerning the selection of member country to host the ECO Clean Energy Centre (ECO-CEC) was held on November 11, 2021, adding that the relevant representatives from Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkey, being interested for hosting the CEC, participated in the meeting. The meeting aimed at considering the technical assessment made by UNIDO on the applications of willing member states in this regard. It was noted that the UNIDO's experts considered the candidacy of Azerbaijan more suitable to host the CEC. He mentioned that based on the UNIDO's assessment, as well as facilitating the consensus on the issue aimed at enhanced regional cooperation, Turkish side supported the application of Azerbaijan to host the CEC.

67. Dr. Bicakli further informed that during discussion, both the UNIDO and the ECO Secretariat emphasized on the importance of establishing some thematic platforms relating to CEC which could be stationed in other interested Member States. He recalled that the 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy held in June 2021 strongly supported the process of establishing CEC and desired the finalization of applications from the intending host countries till the end of August 2021. He added that the ministerial meeting also desired the UNIDO to make necessary assessment on Member Countries' applications to ascertain their suitability to host the CEC, to be finally approved by the 25th COM.

68. Dr. Bicakli underlined that the UNIDO is the main partner in the ECO Project, and since the CEC to be established as one of the future members of the General Networks of Sustainable Energy Centres under UNIDO, it is appearing to be well-founded to rely on the expertise of UNIDO for early establishment of the CEC. He continued that the UNIDO would further assist the ECO to attract donors for seed money to this end, as well as help promote successful foundation and operationalization process of the CEC through financial and technical assistance and appealing new partners. Concluding his briefing, he said that the preparation process for establishing CEC was in final stage, requiring Member States to facilitate the process for selection host of the CEC.

69. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran**, while reiterating their position on applicability of UNIDO's assessment in the matter, desired that the discussion on the issue might be continued for developing better understanding between Iran and the ECO Secretariat before the issue is referred to COM.

70. Considering the views/comments of the Member States, the Council deferred the issue for the next CPR.

Agenda Item No.8

Date of the next CPR Meeting

71. The next (259th) CPR extraordinary Meeting will be held on November 21, 2021 at 1030 hours.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

- Mr. Abdul Qayoom Soleymani, Deputy Head of Mission
- Mr. Abdul Ghani Farahi, Second Secretary

The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan:

- H.E. Mr. Ali Alizade, Ambassador
- Mr. Subhi Ismailzade, Third Secretary

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

- H.E. Mr. Sayed J. Alavi, Permanent Representative
- Mr. Abolqasem Tahmasebi, Director of ECO Affairs Bureau
- Ms. Shokoofeh Shadi, Expert, ECO Affairs Bureau

The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan:

- H.E. Mr. Askhat Orazbay, Ambassador
- Mr. Gamzat Khairov, Counsellor

The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic:

- Mr. Akilbek Kilichev, Counselor

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

- Ms. Mian Azmat Farooq, First Secretary

The Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:

- H.E. Nizomiddin Zohidi, Ambassador
- Mr. Salohiddin Ismoilov, Attaché

The Embassy of the Republic of Turkey:

- H.E. Mr. Derya Ors, Ambassador
- Mr. Mehmet Zahit Uzun, Counsellor

The Embassy of Turkmenistan:

- H.E. Mr. Ahmet Gurbanov, Ambassador
- Mr. Kemal Atayev, Attaché

The Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan:

- H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullayev, Ambassador
- Mr. Umid Babaev, Third Secretary

The ECO Secretariat:

- H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri, Secretary General
- Mr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Rovshan Mirzayev, Director EME
- Ms. Golchin Mozhgan, Chief Accountant
- Mr. Salohiddin Kiromov, Head of CFS
- Mr. Farooq Muhammad, Head of IR
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Mr. Muhammad Ahmed Raza, Steno-Secretary
- Mr. Amjad Saeed Abbasi, Steno-Secretary
- Ms. Aynur Mammadova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Ms. Dilbar Muminova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator